



Department of Justice

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MONTANA MAN SENTENCED FOR RECEIPT AND POSSESSION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

BILLINGS – Jeffrey Hilger, a 53-year-old resident of Helena, was sentenced today to a term of 60 months in federal prison in connection with his guilty plea to receipt and possession of child pornography. Hilger was also ordered to pay a special assessment of \$200, forfeit his computer equipment, and will be under supervision for life.

In an Offer of Proof filed by the United States, the government stated it would have proved at trial the following:

In 2002, the FBI served a search warrant on a web hosting company in California. Seized was the company's database which contained over 20,000 names of suspected purchasers of child pornography who had used credit cards to purchase the material. Hilger was among the names on the list.

Based upon this attempt to purchase, the FBI began an investigation of Hilger. On August 25, 2005, FBI agents interviewed Hilger at his residence in Helena. Hilger admitted that he had tried to purchase access to a child pornography website in approximately 2002 but was denied access.

Hilger then gave the agents consent to do a pre-search of his computers while at his residence. The agents found numerous images of child pornography and his computers were seized.

Hilger admitted that all three of the computers contained child pornography that he had searched for, found, and saved via the Internet. A forensic analysis of Hilger's computer revealed numerous image files and movies containing images of children engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

Because there is no parole in the federal system, the "truth in sentencing" guidelines mandate that Hilger will likely serve **all** of the time imposed by the court. In the federal system, Hilger does have the opportunity to earn a sentence reduction for "good behavior." However, this reduction will not exceed 15% of the overall sentence.

The investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Marcia K. Hurd prosecuted the case.

"This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General

Alberto R. Gonzales created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/."

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